

WASHINGTON- Acting Ranking Member Rep. Ed Pastor gave the following opening remarks at subcommittee markup for the Energy and Water Appropriations bill for FY2012:

"Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate you on beginning the markup process for your first bill as the Energy and Water Chair. I'd also like to thank the majority Subcommittee staff and your personal staff for their great work. As you have already pointed out, the allocation for Energy and Water, \$30.6 billion, is nearly six billion below the President's budget request and one billion below 2011. I know you were faced with very difficult decisions with this allocation.

"Let me first express my appreciation for the inclusion of additional funds for the Corps of Engineers, ensuring that some ongoing projects will not be terminated. Yet, even with the additional funding, it is not enough to meet the nation's need.

"The bill also includes funds for renewable energy loans. This funding will ensure that companies who have spent millions in pursuit of a loan guarantee have an avenue to get such a loan.

"The Science account, critical for US competitiveness, is essentially the same as that of 2011, not an insignificant achievement in light of the challenge this allocation provided. The bill also provides funds for the continuation of a promising new program, ARPA-E; that can also drive innovations to support our scientific competitiveness.

"The bill continues the Subcommittee's efforts over the years to improve program and project management at all of the agencies under the jurisdiction of Energy and Water, honing provisions carried in the past and instituting others aimed at increased oversight.

"While I appreciate your considerable efforts and I recognize difficult choices must be made to address the nation's serious financial situation, the allocation for Energy and Water is insufficient to meet the challenges necessary to ensure our economic recovery and ensure our national security. This bill starkly illustrates the realities of the spending cap set by the House Republican budget.

"In the context of historic flooding in Mississippi River basin and the opening of an expanded Panama Canal, the allocation necessitates inadequate funding to meet the nation's water resource needs. Our ports and harbors provide the foundation for long term economic growth, currently access to these ports is limited to 50% of the channel 33 % of the time. Flood and storm damage reduction projects prevent costly rebuilding and repairs that result from inadequate initial investments. Even with the additional funds that the bill was able to provide, we continue down a shortsighted path that is penny wise, pound foolish.

"Renewable energy programs in this bill are drastically reduced. We can debate whether renewable energy is an environmental program, and whether it is a market problem. In either case, it is a national security problem. We must expand the mix of our energy supply, we must use the energy supply we have more efficiently and we must transport it more efficiently. We have to make an investment to do that – the allocation, once again, does not allow for support of this critical and necessary investment.

"Nonproliferation accounts are reduced significantly, while I appreciate your efforts, Mr. Chairman, to preserve the most critical activities, the allocation results in a reduction in efforts to secure dangerous material.

"I also am troubled that this bill waives the application of Davis Bacon and includes a prohibition of funds to develop, adopt, implement, administer, or enforce a change or supplement to rules related to Clean Water Act regulatory guidelines.

"In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate my appreciation for your work with us on many issues, you have ensured the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee continues its tradition of bipartisanship—the Subcommittee has operated collaboratively and effectively for many years and, within the constraints you were faced with, you largely addressed the interests we have expressed. Yet, I continue to have grave concerns that this bill, due to the completely inadequate allocation, will not meet the needs of our country.

"Thank you again, Mr. Chairman for the time."

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